

SMP Work Group Minutes
09:00 am, Monday, December 5, 2011
Delta NRCS office

Attendees: John Sottolare (USBR), Steve McCall (USBR), Terry Stroh (USBR), Mike Baker (USBR-Contractor), Dale Woodbury (NRCS), Theresa McGovern (NRCS), Barb Osmundson (USFWS), Rick Krueger (USFWS), Denis Reich (CSU), Ken Leib (USGS), Dave Kanzer (Colo. River District), Jedd Sondergard (BLM), Ed Suppes (UWVUA), Steve Fletcher (UWVUA), Sonja Chavez de Baca (GB/GVSTF) on conf. phone, Steve Miller (CWCB) on conf. phone.

1. Finalizing the Program Formulation Document

Status/Discussions/Decisions:

1. Despite returning only a few comments, Steve reported that the public had a good level of interest in the PFD.
2. Draft copy has gone to cooperators, water users, etc. for comment.
3. Hoping to finalize and send to the FWS by December 25, but most likely will be closer to the end of the month.
4. Action plan subject to revision every year. Mike Baker is working on plan for this year.

Action Item(s):

1. Group can send comments on suggestions for text and photos by Friday, December 9th.
2. Steve to send a copy to Aspinall EIS cooperators that have not received a copy to inform them of what's included in the PFD. The intent is not to seek comments.
3. Final comments for Action plan are due this week by Friday, December 9th.

2. Comments on Committee Structure Table/subcommittee consolidation

Status/Discussions/Decisions:

1. Suggestion made to combine the Technical Review (TR) and Science/research (SR) Subcommittees.
2. Frank Riggle (NRCS) and Tom Grett (Shavano) have left. Replacements will need to be identified by each agency.

Action Item(s):

1. Group to make recommendation on combining the TR and SR Subcommittees.
2. Replacements for Frank and Tom need to be identified by each agency.

3. Need for Management Committee meeting or conference call

Status/Discussions/Decisions:

1. Terry stated that Reclamation was comfortable with not having a management meeting or conference call to finalize the SMP since no major changes were proposed.
2. The need for an MOA for plan implementation was discussed. It was recommended that an implementation MOA is not needed to implement the plan.

Action Item(s):

1. Barb to verify that the FWS management concurs in that item #2 is consistent with the language in the PBO.

4. Brainstorm/list/prioritize technical and science questions/issues

Status/Discussions/Decisions:

1. Group discussed the need to identify potential new sources of selenium caused by agricultural and non-agricultural land use changes. These new sources can have the potential to offset our selenium reduction efforts. Examples include golf courses, developments (particularly on previously non-irrigated soils), and the expansion of agricultural irrigation on previously un-irrigated lands due to the availability of increased water supply from newly, piped laterals.
2. Mike produced a list of previously brainstormed technical and science questions for the implementation phase of the SMP.
3. Ken brought up the question of whether bio-accumulated selenium originates mainly from the dissolved selenium in the water column or from the selenium adsorbed to the sediment load. Barb thought that the bio-accumulated selenium originated from the dissolved phase.
4. Ken stated that the HUC basin boundaries have been determined for the north Delta, Bostwick Park and Ridgway areas. Modeled salinity loads for those basins should be ready next week, with estimated Selenium loads to follow in the next couple of months.

Action Item(s):

1. Group will need to prioritize technical and science questions from item #2 in order to better utilize the limited funding available.
2. USGS to supply USBR with HUC boundaries and estimated salinity loads as soon as possible.

5. Update on Lower Gunnison Wise Water Use Council

Status/Discussions/Decisions:

1. Sonya stated that the initial public meeting held in Montrose last month had a good turnout. There were 15-18 people who attended with good feedback. Ashley Bembenek facilitated.

2. At the Wise Water (WW) Council meeting, Ashley put together and distributed a survey to collect comments and suggestions. The WW Council is currently working together to determine their direction and goals.
3. Discussion was made on ways to get the WW Council's message out. Some thought that newspaper ads were costly and other methods would be better. Dave suggested the use of a public website to make the group more visible.
4. Next WW Council meeting is scheduled for December 6 at the USFS office in Delta (Update: the January meeting will be on Tuesday, the 10th in Montrose).

6. Next SMP Work Group meeting:

1. Thursday, January 5, 2012 at NRCS in Delta to start implementation of the SMP Action Plan, develop recommendation for selenium activities to be considered for funding by the State of Colorado's Species Conservation Trust Fund, other funding needs, and outreach activities.